

MELKITE RESOURCES FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

Parents: Blessed ✠ is our God at all times, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Response: Amen.

Parents: Glory to You, our God, glory to You. Heavenly King, Consoler, Spirit of Truth, present in all places and filling all things, the Treasury of blessings and the Giver of life, come and dwell in us, cleanse us of all stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

Children: Holy ✠ God! Holy Mighty One! Holy Immortal One! Have mercy on us! *(Three times w/ metany)*

Glory be to the Father ✠ and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

All-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us! Lord, forgive us our sins! Master, pardon our transgressions! Holy One, look upon us and heal our infirmities for Your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy! *(Three times)*

Glory be to the Father ✠ and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE 4

The women disciples of the Lord,
having learned from the angel the joyful announcement of the resurrection,
and having rejected the ancestral sentence, proudly told the apostles:
Death is despoiled. Christ God is risen, bestowing to the world great mercy."

EPISTLE: EPHESIANS 5:8-19

Brethren, walk as children of light (for the fruit of light consists in all goodness and justice and truth), make sure of what is well pleasing to God, and have nothing to do with the fruitless works of darkness, but rather expose them; for of the things they do in secret people are ashamed even to speak. But everything that is exposed is made manifest by the light: for all that is manifest is light. Hence it is said: "Awake, sleeper, and arise from among the dead, and Christ will enlighten you."

See to it, therefore, brethren, that you walk with care, not as the unwise, but as the wise, redeeming the moment, for the days are evil. Be not imprudent, then, but understand what is the Lord's will. And be not drunk with wine, for in such is revelry, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your hearts to the Lord.

GOSPEL: LUKE 14:16 - 24

The Lord told this parable, "A certain man gave a great supper, and he invited many. And he sent his servant at suppertime to tell those invited to come, for everything is now ready. And they all with one accord began to excuse themselves. The first said to him, 'I have bought a farm, and I must go out and see it; I pray you hold me excused.'

And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am on my way to try them; I pray you hold me excused.'

And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'

And the servant returned, and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant. 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor, and the crippled, and the lame, and the blind.'

And the servant said, 'Sir, your order has been carried out, and still there is room.'

Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and make them come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you that none of those who were invited shall taste of my supper.' For many are called but few are chosen."

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

All too often when we read the Gospel we keep the words of Jesus at arm's length, never letting them sink in and really challenge our life. Why? Most of the time the reason that we would prefer to pass over our Lord's teaching in a superficial way is because his teachings are truly challenging and life changing if we allow them to have their full impact.

Today's Gospel is one of those "challenging" teachings of Jesus. "Many are called but few are chosen," Jesus tells us in the Gospel today and these words are spoken to us today just as much as they were spoken to Jesus' hearers two thousand years ago. "*Many are called but few are chosen.*"

Among those who hear this Gospel passage today in the Church most will allow Jesus' words to pass over them with little or no serious consideration. A few however, hearing these words will respond to Jesus by asking how one is to be "chosen." The invitation to participate in God's life, the invitation to salvation, is offered to all, as Saint Paul says in the Epistle, "Gentile and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, Barbarian and Scythian, slave and freeman." However, not all respond to the invitation. Many then, and many today, find more important things with which to occupy their lives. The way of salvation begins with an invitation on God's part, but to that invitation we must respond in a real way. All of us are invited to the wedding banquet (heaven), but not all of us will choose to go.

Choosing to go is not simply an intellectual act – it is not a matter of mere words. To go to the wedding banquet of God we must, as any good wedding guest must do, prepare ourselves. We must make ourselves acceptable to God so that when we arrive we will be chosen to enter. Are we willing to prepare ourselves to enter into heaven or will we find something more important to do with our lives?

CHALLENGE QUESTIONS:

1. What things in our life do we spend the most time being concerned about?
2. If our first concern is not for God and our salvation, can we really expect to be among the chosen few?
3. What things can cause us not to respond to God's invitation?
4. What practical steps can I take to be sure to make God's invitation the most important thing in my life?
5. How does my life look different if I am preparing for the wedding feast of Jesus or if I am not?